

Urbanity and Construction of the City

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Urbanity is a *real* quality of an urban place. This concept means that the urbanity is inextricably related to the architecture of a place, the architecture of the city. The presence of the built environment is the first essential condition for the development of an urban area: through its constitutive elements is able to contribute directly and intentionally to the level of urbanity. In this way urban forms are not only a material product that defines a physical space, but they become quickly the causes of the transformations of urban life, which belong to other economic, political and social disciplines. In this perspective, the concept of urbanity is the capability of the built environment to produce an urban fabric with a value of identity at the urban scale, able to acquire the complexity of the legacy of the past and to develop in a coherent architecture of the city for the contemporary urban life.

The paper will develop the topic of 'urbanity' in relation to the dynamics of the construction of the city. Especially, it will consider the experiences of social housing in Vienna and Frankfurt am Main in the Twenties of the Twentieth Century, wherein architecture was the essential tool not only for the construction of the city, but also a careful reflection in all sectors that contribute to the quality of the urban environment. Vienna and Frankfurt represent also two opposite but complementary models of city: the compact city of the *Höfe* and the satellite city of the *Siedlung*. In both cases the architecture is linked to the place, which, thanks to its stance regarding the city, confer a high value of urbanity to the urban space.

Indeed, the study of Vienna and Frankfurt cases starts from the hypothesis that these two models are still efficient today. In this way these experiences have the capability to provide answers to the issues that contemporary architecture continues to pose in an urban context; in this sense, the architecture and the city today are in crisis: the assumption is that cities often have solved a large number of problems that we face today. Especially, the paper will address this analysis about the urbanity by considering three essential parameters for the construction of the city: the density, the relationship between typology and morphology, and the public spaces.

For this reason asserting that 'Urbanity is a *real* quality' means considering these examples in their current urban conditions: the aim is to highlight that the urbanity characterizes an urban place, when the construction of the city becomes part of the city itself. In this sense the concept of urbanity refers to the reality of architecture: indeed, the cases are analyzed as parts of the city, which constitute a recognizable and fundamental presence in the contemporary city.